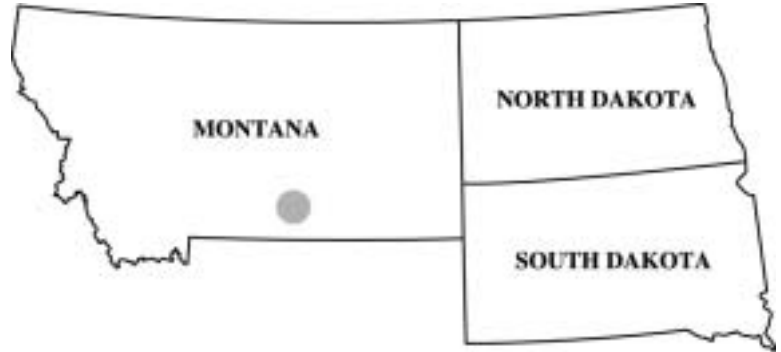




# Pompeys Pillar National Monument

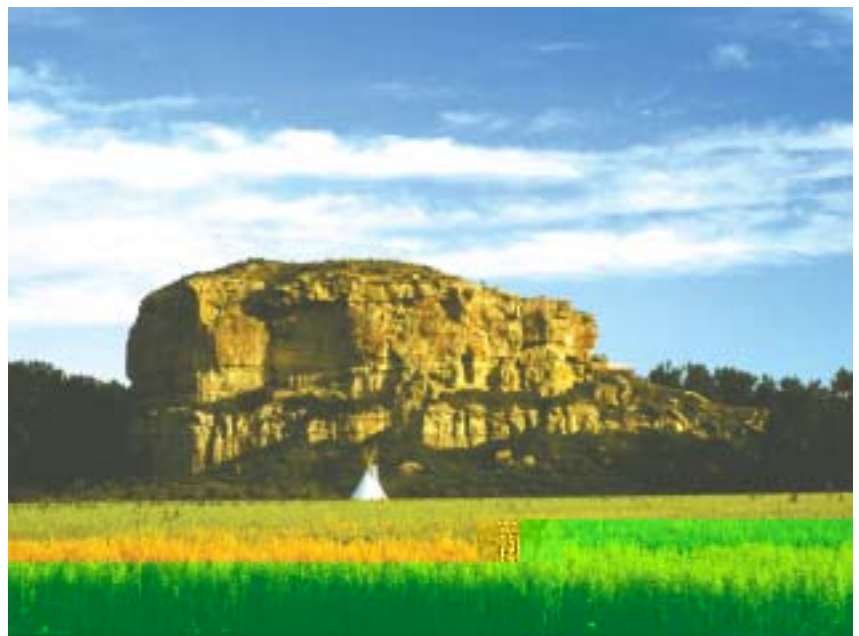
## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- BLM has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for development at Pompeys Pillar. The preferred alternative identifies the general location of an interpretive center, provides a mid-range facility of about 5,700 square feet, allows for future expansion, and provides some flexibility in the season of use. This alternative falls within desired cost targets and emphasizes outdoor interpretive experiences. A 1996 plan recommended a 12,000-square foot facility and limited season of use.
- As a side note, in late 2000, United Harvest began construction of a large, high speed grain elevator near Pompeys Pillar. The Pompeys Pillar Historical Association has filed a lawsuit against the state of Montana to require a more extensive environmental study of the project.



## HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- Pompeys Pillar is a 200-foot sandstone butte 28 miles northeast of Billings, Montana. The only known physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark expedition that is still visible along the trail is Captain Clark's signature which he carved into the Pillar on July 25, 1806, and recorded doing so in his journal.
- BLM purchased Pompeys Pillar November 22, 1991, for its historic significance and its interpretive and recreational potential.
- In 1992, the BLM constructed limited facilities for the protection of resources and the comfort and safety of visitors. Facilities included a small log contact station and a stairway to Clark's signature and the top of the Pillar.
- The Pompeys Pillar Historical Association has worked closely with BLM in the acquisition, operation and development of this site. It has also agreed to raise \$2 million to match an FY1999 \$2 million Congressional appropriation to go toward the construction of a new interpretive center.
- In FY2002, Congress appropriated an additional \$2.9 million for construction of the center.



- Following the FY 1999 appropriation, the BLM hired a contractor to prepare an EA addressing construction of an interpretive center.
- The contractor's preliminary EA had a number of shortcomings including the lack of a "mid-range" alternative. Instead, it addressed only alternatives for "no action", a 12,000 square foot center, and a highway rest area/interpretive center.
- The site was designated a national monument January 17, 2001, which may increase annual visitation.
- Since then, BLM has finished an EA which identifies a "mid-range" alternative.

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- We must resolve any protests on our "mid-range" plan as quickly as possible so construction can be completed in a timely manner.
- We need to remain cognizant of our ability to fund any new construction as well as our ability to fund annual operation and maintenance.

### WHO ELSE IS CONCERNED?

- Public interest is high regarding both the site itself and construction of an interpretive center.
- Feedback from public meetings and briefings for elected officials has been generally favorable toward the smaller interpretive center.
- Some members of the PPHA still prefer larger facility development.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Sandy Brooks, Billings Field Manager, (406) 896-5013.

